

Teacher Tool 150: Media Literacy Middle School Study Guide

Study Guide for Media 5: Media Literacy in the Social Media Age (Middle School Program)

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Media Literacy in the Age of Social Media (Middle School Program)

Original Date: November 9, 2017

Grade Levels: 6-8

Program Description:

As part of Media Literacy Week 2017 student groups were invited to join us to explore different aspects of media literacy in the age of social media. Three different programs of the day targeted elementary, middle school, and high school audiences separately, all of them focused on the big picture question: How do we know what is real?

Each program explored our big picture question in a variety of ways. This document provides information on the program targeted to middle school students. For our middle school program our focus was on one's online presence and the digital citizenship involved in creating and presenting material on social media and other online outlets and in digesting information presented on those platforms. Our expert panelists shared information on the topics and answered student questions on the subject. More details on the middle school focused program are provided in the Program Format section later in this document.

Guests for the program are Don Goble, Broadcast Journalism Instructor—Ladue Horton Watkins High School and Natasha Casey, Associate Professor of Communications—Blackburn College

Program Objectives:

For our middle school program, students will:

1. recognize that media messages shape our culture and society.
2. recognize that media makers have own experiences, beliefs, values, and motivations.
3. evaluate media messages to recognize bias, spin, misinformation, and mistruths.
4. discuss the concepts of privacy, security, and safe and responsible use of social media

Program Format:

Time codes are provided in blue to help you find specific segments in the program.

I. Welcome and Introduction of Student Groups and Guests (00:00 to 02:18)

II. The Growing Influence of Social Media on People’s Knowledge (02:19 to 15:10)

- A. Guest panelists discuss the growth of social media as a source of personal and news-based information as we explore the concepts associated with program objective 1
- B. Student questions on the topic and interaction with program guests

Student Questions Included in this Segment:

1. What did inventors of social media want from their invention?
2. Why are people attracted to social media?
3. What are some of the ways social media has changed the way we think and do things?

III. How to Be a Media Literate Consumer of Social Media Content (15:11 to 35:18)

In this segment, we look at how to vet items you see and read, the use of reverse image resource and other verification tools, and strategies for reading and understanding social media posts.

- A. Interactive activity using still images, graphics, and stories from social media sites as we determine what is real or fake, and how to search for clues in the examples themselves to be able to tell the difference
- B. Student questions and interaction with guest experts as we investigate the examples and explore the concepts associated with program objectives 2 and 3.

Student Questions Included in this Segment:

Why do people believe what they see on social media?
How can you tell if a media source is biased?

IV. How to Be a Responsible Producer of Social Media Content (35:19 to 43:04)

In this segment, we explore how to present your social media information through your online presence, expectations for who will see your content and how they might interpret your information, and the responsibilities of being a “news source” or an “eyewitness” or “commentator” or some other role you choose to take on.

- A. Interaction with guest experts and students as we explore the concepts associated with program objective 4.
- B. Student questions on the topic and interaction with program guests

Student Questions Included this Segment:

Jeffrey: Why do people think it is a good idea to post fake stuff on social media?
Eric: What are people looking for when posting negative stuff on social media?
Jaydah M.: Are there any laws about how we use social media?

V. Closing Segment (43:05 to 44:47)

- A. Final words from guests
- B. Summarize learning, thank guests, say good-bye

Featured National Standards:

Common Core National Standards

CC.6.R.I.7 Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue

CC.7.W.8 Research to Build and Present Knowledge: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation

CC.9-10.SL.2 Comprehension and Collaboration: Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

RI.4.8 (Priority Standard) Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

RI.4.7 (supporting standard) 7. Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

P21: Partnership for 21st Century Learning (all levels)

<http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-framework>

Analyze Media

- Understand both how and why media messages are constructed, and for what purposes
- Examine how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded, and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors
- Apply a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of media

Program-Related Activity Suggestions:

- 1. Investigate Your Own Examples of Online Content**—Using the website featured in the program and/or examples of online content that you and your students bring to class, investigate your own examples of online content similar to what was done during the program. Use the activity to delve even deeper into vetting items you see and read, the use of reverse image resource and other verification tools, as well as strategies for reading and understanding social media posts.
- 2. Sharing Examples of Student Online Posts and Publications**—Build on ideas explored in the program by having students share examples of their own online posts and publications. Have students read the examples without knowing who authored them. Have discussion ensue on what types of posts were presented, what ideas did students get of who they author might be, what analysis they have of the point of view of the poster, and other topics relevant to a media literacy discussion.